



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Roadwork to begin for improvements to Western Avenue in South Portland**

South Portland, ME – Starting the week of October 23<sup>rd</sup>, drivers using Western Avenue in South Portland will begin to see preparations for upcoming roadwork. Maine DOT, working with the City of South Portland, is completing a series of road improvement projects in the greater Maine Mall area that includes an upgrade of Western Avenue from Maine Mall Road to Gorham Road. The planned improvements to Western Avenue include:

- Widening to 2 lanes in each direction, with a center turning lane
- Sidewalks on both sides with granite curbs
- Cross walks
- New traffic lights at the intersections at Foden Road and Gorham Road

Maine DOT Project Resident John Mayol stated, "These improvements will increase the capacity of Western Avenue, but most importantly we will be enhancing safety and convenience." Mr. Mayol pointed out that important infrastructure improvements to water mains, sewer and gas lines have been integrated with the roadway project.

The Western Avenue roadwork has been planned to allow for the normal flow of traffic in both directions, with occasional brief stops as flagmen allow construction vehicles to safely enter or position equipment. Travel over unpaved surfaces will be required during certain phases, but otherwise use of the roadway should be unaffected.

To help keep the public informed, Maine DOT provides project details and updates through its web site, [www.mainedot.gov](http://www.mainedot.gov), as well as email updates to those who register for them at that site. Additionally, construction updates and traffic information are always available by calling 511, another service of Maine DOT.

The Western Avenue project is expected to be complete in June 2008. Several of the other Maine DOT or City of South Portland roadway improvements in the Maine Mall area are either complete or under way. These include:

- Payne Road Bridge Reconstruction – The bridge is being replaced, and will feature 3 lanes in each direction plus a sidewalk

- New right-hand turning lane from Maine Mall Road onto Gorham Road – Complete
- Creation of Jetport Plaza Road – Complete
- Improvements to Western Avenue and Westbrook Street Intersection – Complete

Another project, the creation of a new entrance ramp to I-295 at Exit 3 and Westbrook Street/Broadway is pending. All told, the series of improvements represent an investment in transportation infrastructure of more than \$26 million. The projects were announced in October of 2005 and are expected to be complete by late 2008.

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